

Hasan for being the cause of its republication. It is just a pity that the entry in Appendix II, relating to the Royal Asiatic Society, which was founded in 1823, confuses it with the Royal Society, which was founded in 1660 – all a little odd as Mushirul Hasan is himself a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society.

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EARLY ŚAIVISM AND THE SKANDAPURĀÑA. SECTS AND CENTRES. By PETER C. BISSCHOP. Groningen Oriental Studies Vol. XXI. pp. vii, 368. Groningen, Egbert Forsten, 2006.  
doi:10.1017/S1356186307007882

This volume presents a “slightly revised version” of the University of Groningen PhD thesis which the author defended in 2004, and consists of a critical edition and philological commentary on a section of the original *Skandapurāṇa* (hereafter SP). As many readers of this review will know, a group of scholars based in Groningen have for the last decade and a half been engaged in an ongoing research project on this text, for which a number of remarkably early manuscript witnesses survive (the earliest of which, Bisschop’s S<sub>1</sub>, is dated to 810 CE). These early sources, of Nepalese provenance, had previously been edited by Kṛṣṇapraśād Bhattarāī under the title *Skandapurāṇasya Ambikākāṇḍah* (Kathmandu, 1988). As a result of the Groningen team’s efforts, it has been definitively established that the tradition which these sources transmit is that of the earliest extant integral text to refer to itself as the SP. They have also identified testimonia and a growing body of textual parallels, and have unearthed further manuscript sources not used by Bhattarāī, containing later versions of the SP closely allied with the Nepalese texts. These later sources, already showing the effects of the speciation that marks the subsequent massive expansion of the SP, refer to themselves as the *purāṇa*’s *Revā-* and *Ambikā-* *kāṇḍas*, and are recorded with the sigla R and A in the project’s publications. There is only a single R ms., but at least seven closely related A mss have so far been identified and used.

In the volume under review, Bisschop adds considerably to this text-historical picture through his study of the SP’s geographical imagination, particularly its description of the network of places of Śaiva pilgrimage (*āyatana*s) acknowledged in the text. The description of these sites and the merit that one accrues in visiting them are set out in the Nepalese sources in a largely stereotyped form: the place and its Śaiva shrine are named, and the reward the pilgrim receives (largely postmortem) briefly detailed. The departures from this basic template are interesting and significant: the places where the SP’s compilers depart from this pattern and include additional mythic or descriptive material may *ipso facto* be understood as especially important for the Śaiva religion at the time of the SP’s composition. Even more important, however, is the fact that the materials edited by Bisschop change considerably from the Nepalese version to the later R and A texts. This is in keeping with the massive expansion of the latter portion of these later versions, unlike the *Skandapurāṇa* volumes published to date where the R and A texts shows only trivial differences, mostly scribal corruptions. As a result, a single chapter of 191 verses transmitted in the Nepalese mss has been expanded into 411 verses divided over five *ādhyaṭyas* in R and A (p. 5).

Faced with this situation, Bisschop has opted to edit two distinct texts on the *āyatana*s, one deriving from two of the extant Nepalese texts (SP<sub>S</sub>) and the other a reconstruction of the presumed common ancestor of the R and A mss (SP<sub>RA</sub>). The first of these closely follows the text as published by Bhattarāī while the second is here edited for the first time; Bisschop defends his editorial reconstruction of an already corrupt RA archetype as a text with stipulable linguistic and metrical idiosyncrasies, to my mind convincingly (pp. 53–59). Equally convincing is his argument (pp. 8–12) that SP<sub>RA</sub> represents not

just a mass of accretion and interpolation, but consists of a systematic revision as well as an expansion of the earlier material, one that is in certain cases more sophisticated in metrical form and expression than the earlier Nepalese version.

The text-historical argument for both SP<sub>s</sub> and SP<sub>RA</sub> in turn provides the grounds for a broader inquiry into cultural history, the ‘sects and centres’ of the book’s subtitle. This inquiry centres on the question of the compilers of the original *Skandapurāṇa*, whom Bisschop, extending the conclusions found in the earlier volumes, compellingly argues were members of the Pāśupata order (pp. 38–50). Sifting through both the extant textual evidence and prior scholarly opinion, this brief discussion provides an admirably judicious précis on the origins of the Pāśupata religion. Among other points of real interest found here is Bisschop’s contention that Lakulīśa, the religion’s alleged founder, is probably not the historical figure that earlier scholars have presumed him to be. Instead, Bisschop suggests, he might better be understood as an *ex post facto* invention to account for the diversity of closely allied lineages of early Śaiva theists (pp. 45ff.).

Bisschop’s work closely follows the layout of the earlier SP volumes, with a lengthy introduction (pp. 1–60) and English synopsis of the text (pp. 63–86) preceding the critically edited text (pp. 89–169). Following the commendable precedent set by the previous volume, Bisschop also includes an extensive interpretive and philological commentary to both texts he has edited (pp. 173–298), along with a concordance of the two versions and two indices (pp. 301–302; 335–368). Both SP<sub>s</sub> and SP<sub>RA</sub> are accompanied by fully positive apparatus, again closely following the format of the earlier volumes. When reading either version (or both in parallel), in order to fully understand Bisschop’s interpretation of a given passage, the reader has to tack back and forth between any of three different parts of the book: the synopsis (which is itself often complex), constituted text along with variants, and commentary. I found this to be occasionally unwieldy, although the explanation found in the synopses and commentary is admirably lucid and informative. For a Sanskritist, it is easy enough to follow the thread once one becomes familiar with the structure of the book (in the end, I settled on a system of coloured bookmarks), but for other interested readers—scholars of religion, archaeologists, or historians of art, for instance—it may prove difficult to get at the wealth of interesting information and interpretation scattered throughout. And this would be a shame really, as the book is certainly deserving of a wide readership of scholars interested in early Indic religion and culture.

As was the case with earlier volumes, when reading through SP<sub>s</sub>, one is consistently reminded of how good an edition Bhaṭṭarāī’s *editio princeps* in fact is. I hasten to add that this is not intended to be a slight on Bisschop, who has often wisely chosen to follow Bhaṭṭarāī’s lead, something he readily acknowledges. The policy here (again, as in earlier volumes) to fully record the results of Bhaṭṭarāī’s emendations in the apparatus shows the earlier editor’s care and good sense. Bhaṭṭarāī’s edition does show a penchant for conjecture, sometimes to smooth out what he must have felt to be awkward constructions. Bisschop’s edition allows the interested reader to see the extent of the conjecture and the underlying textual evidence, and judge its value for herself. There are certainly passages in text constituted by Bhaṭṭarāī that left room for improvement, and Bisschop’s own reconstructions of the SP<sub>s</sub> text are frequently very impressive.

SP<sub>RA</sub>, edited here for the first time, is far more troublesome, and some of Bisschop’s work of emendation and textual repair is nothing short of heroic. Many doubtful passages remain, marked out in the text by obeli, but there are few if any problems that go undiagnosed, and a great many that are convincingly solved. In editing SP<sub>RA</sub>, Bisschop shows an unstated preference for the readings found in the single manuscript R (presumably since it is the earliest of these sources), despite the fact that as he himself admits reading it “necessarily requires an element of interpretation as the transcription of many of its characters is based on considerations of sense” (52n.). This is a slippery standard to adopt as a guideline, and there are places scattered throughout the edition where this preference leads to some

awkward decisions, including some of the text's remaining cruces. Bisschop's familiarity with the style and subject matter on the SP and other allied literature is very impressive, and his arguments for a great many of his proposed repairs are models of careful editorial reason. It is a credit to the thoroughness and transparency of his apparatus and annotation that the edition provides such a strong evidentiary basis to its readers, to allow them to weigh the merits of his decisions and to use their own judgement.

To give only a single example where Bisschop's reliance on R may have kept him from other possible solutions: SP<sub>RA</sub> 3.33cd reads *†na vavandur ca tam† liṅgam vanam praviviṣuh punah*. This closely follows R's reading, which Bisschop argues is irremediably corrupt, rightly pointing to the *sandhi* error that remains in the text, for the correct *\*vavanduś ca* (this is itself a correction in the manuscript for the partly illegible *na vavandu(r)cyu tam*). Following the lead of the A group (all of which read the nonsensical *naravaddham sutam*), however, a solution is just possible. I propose emending the crux to *naravaddhy arya tam*, "[Wild animals], having worshipped that linga there [in Rudrakotī], as if they were men, returned once more to the forest." The non-pāṇinean "epic" gerund *arya* is seen later in this same chapter of SP<sub>RA</sub> (see 3.83a and Bisschop's note *ad loc.*) This emendation preserves the meaningful *naravat* seen in all the A sources and accounts for R's *rcya* conjunct, though admittedly it necessitates the addition of the empty particle *hi* to account for the metre. In defense of this, Bisschop himself resorts to a similar metre-saving *hi* at 3.86b. The bad reading transmitted in R can be explained by the attraction of the perfect *praviviṣuh* in the second half of the line. The reading I propose would certainly merit a cautious wavy line printed beneath it; but it would also yield sense, and better account for the diversity of Bisschop's sources.

For all that the *āyatana* descriptions are concerned with mythology and with the supernatural, the list of sites, the vast majority of which can be plotted on a map of India, lends a 'reality effect' to the text. This is something that Bisschop handily exploits, collating the testimony of his edition with epigraphy and with the evidence of *māhātmya* texts concerned with specific locales. Perhaps the most interesting and important information that can be gleaned from this concerns the early history of the Pāśupatas, especially the importance for that order of the *āyatana* of Kārohaṇa. This site—modern Karvan, southeast of Vadodara in Gujarat—is known from other texts as the place where Śiva is said to have incarnated as Lakuliśa. This figure is called Lāguḍī at SP<sub>S</sub> 129d, in what Bisschop argues is the earliest attestation of a version of this narrative. This falls in the Nepalese version's relatively extensive treatment of Kārohaṇa: at twenty-nine verses (SP<sub>S</sub> 110–138), this is the longest single description of an *āyatana* in that text (only the twenty-three verses on Vārāṇasī, which immediately follow, comes close). This in turn served as the basis for a massive expansion in the other recension, where the account of Kārohaṇa takes up almost an entire *adhyāya* (SP<sub>RA</sub> 5:39–108). The relationship between these two descriptions of Kārohaṇa present an especially intricate case of the revision and expansion undertaken by the compilers of SP<sub>RA</sub>, one that would merit a separate independent study. To speak only of content instead of questions of philological detail, it is significant that the editor-scribes responsible for the later version seem to deliberately elide much that is characteristically Pāśupata from the description of the *āyatana*. Not only is the crucial reference to *lāguḍīḥ* (SP<sub>S</sub> 129d) replaced by the generic *vibhuḥ* (SP<sub>RA</sub> 5:87d) and the name of the Śaiva figure Somaśarman changed to Vṛddhaśarman (SP<sub>S</sub> 124b vs. SP<sub>RA</sub> 5:82d), but terms diagnostic of Pāśupata origin can be seen to have been conspicuously removed. So the characteristic *pañcartha* (SP<sub>S</sub> 130b; this refers to the 'five principles' taught in the *Pāśupatasūtra*) is substituted by the banal adverbial *yathārtham* ('suitably' SP<sub>RA</sub> 5:87c), and a compact description of the practices of a Pāśupata ascetic is replaced by a lengthy and entirely conventional apologia for brahmanical *dharma*. Bisschop notes all of these changes and suggests in his annotation that SP<sub>RA</sub> contains "a clear tendency to get rid of or weaken all Pāśupata allusions" in the description of Kārohaṇa (*ad* 87c, p. 293). Whether this provides evidence for a more detailed redaction history for the *Skandapurāṇa*—where the Pāśupata text represented by SP<sub>S</sub> was reconfigured by other Śaivas, or retooled for a different audience altogether in the SP<sub>RA</sub> recension—remains a question only tantalisingly suggested here.

But a critical edition, especially one produced so early in a scholar's career, is a sort of promissory note. The intimate knowledge of the style and matter of a given body of materials that an editor gains in preparing the text provides the raw materials for much further work. Already since the appearance of this volume, Bisschop has published further brief studies on Pāśupata materials, including a preliminary study of the text of the *Pāśupatasūtra* itself and its commentary. It is both hoped and expected that his future studies will be of the same quality as this careful and useful piece of work.

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A HINDU EDUCATION. EARLY YEARS OF THE BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY. By LEAH RENOLD. pp xvii, 237. New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2005.  
doi:10.1017/S135618630700781X

The author's subject, and a good one, is the Banaras Hindu University from its foundation in 1915—the bill setting it up was passed 1 October – till Indian independence, seen as its golden years. At a time of debate in Britain today over the virtue of faith schools this study of a faith university has a real topicality.

All the expectations of those who campaigned for such a university were in many respects to be belied. The British broke a tradition of a purely secular education, post-Mutiny, in the hope that a religious based institution would curb the seditious outlook of Indian students. They brought the Indian princes on side to strengthen their cause. The university still went on to become a stronghold of Indian nationalism. Annie Besant's Central Hindu College, set up in 1899, was the core of the University to be but she had hoped it would be a university of all the Indian religions only to be disappointed with its being a narrowly Hindu foundation. Pandit Malaviya is the key figure. His vision was of the university making a significant contribution to a Hindu renaissance if in a context of a western-style education. In fact the so-called modern subjects, and above all engineering, proved far more prestigious than the indological.

This was no easy piece of research for the author. She battled to gain access to the university records. She had to weather student protest on campus in the 90s. Even more demandingly, as she puts it, “to make progress in my research I had to progress spiritually” (p. xii). She successfully tracked down former students and their interviews, such as for example with the communist Rustam Saitin, suggest how liberal a ‘civic sphere’ the university indeed became. She faces the perennial problems of all historians contextualising a specific theme within the history of Empire and nationalism with some adroitness but her accounts of the parallel history of the setting up of the Aligarh Muslim University in 1920 and then Gandhi's own version of a Hindu education, both in his Kashi Vidyapith, the Congress party's alternative university to the BHU during the non-cooperation movement 1920–22 and in his ashrams, does lead to some loss of focus. Incidentally Gandhi comes out very poorly from the comparison, seemingly both Luddite and philistine: “Gandhi's ideas of education do not correspond with the common definition of education” (p. 113). I wonder why she left out any account of that famous speech by Gandhi at the inauguration of the University? It might have been more informative in terms of contextualisation had she followed up on her insight that the University was part of the Hindu religious reform movements, not really addressed in the text, and possibly made a backward glance at the Sanskrit colleges in nineteenth-century Calcutta and Banares.

So in what sense was this a faith institution? So much hinged on Pandit Malaviya, born 25 December 1861, son of a Brahman reciter of puranic texts, “a small, soft-spoken man of delicate features”, “instinct with intellectuality”. Early on he had a reputation as pro-Brahmin and anti-Muslim, taking up such